

July 31, 2025

Ms. Josett D. Monette
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Santa Fe, NM 87505

Secretary Monette,

Enclosed is the 2025 State Tribal Collaboration Report for the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM). Any questions or feedback on this report can be directed to the Operations Bureau Chief, Jessica Madrid at (505) 500-9693 or Jessica.madrid@dhsem.nm.gov.

Signed by:



Major General Miguel Aguilar
Interim Cabinet Secretary

New Mexico Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

Attachment:

2025 State Tribal Collaboration Report – Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

STATE TRIBAL COLLABORATION ACT 2025 AGENCY REPORT



July 31, 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Agency Overview

The New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) works to protect the people of New Mexico through comprehensive and coordinated programs of mitigating hazards, preparing for emergencies, preventing attacks, and recovering from disasters. DHSEM carries out this mission through six bureaus: Preparedness, Operations, Recovery, Mitigation, Fusion Center, and Grants.

2. Mission Statement

1. *New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*

- i. Our department prepares for a wide variety of emergencies, including wildfires, flooding, health crises, and domestic attacks. When necessary, the state assists localities whose capabilities are overwhelmed, and DHSEM serves as the conduit for federal assistance. Our work in emergency management is coordinated around the five mission areas of the National Preparedness Goal: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.
- ii. DHSEM also coordinates with state and local law enforcement, as well as federal partners like the FBI and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, to obtain, analyze, and distribute intelligence on possible threats to public safety. Additionally, our department facilitates and distributes tens of millions of dollars in federal grants to New Mexico communities every year. DHSEM also works closely with customs and border officials to secure our nation's borders.
- iii. The New Mexico State Fire Marshal's Office became a part of DHSEM in 2021. The mission of the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) is to protect the lives and property of New Mexico residents and guests from the devastating effects of fire. This goal is accomplished through promotion of public safety and fire prevention programs, as well as resources distributed to the New Mexico fire departments for fire protection services. The SFMO carries out its mission through four bureaus: Code Enforcement, Fire Investigations, Fire Service Support, and the Fire Training Academy.

2. Tribal Liaison Program

- i. Currently DHSEM is working to rebuild our tribal liaison program. DHSEM's Tribal Liaison Program operated with the goal of developing a sustainable engagement and outreach plan in FY 2025. In FY 2026, we will build on the draft plans and continue our proactive outreach to Tribes and Pueblos across the state.
- ii. We are continuing to support the Mescalero Apache Tribe with recovery efforts following the South Fork Fire, Salt Fire, and flooding that occurred in 2024. We have also provided support in their Emergency Operations as they have

responded to additional flooding this monsoon season and the Seven Springs Fire that impacted Tribal land in June 2025.

- iii. Our commitment is to ensure that we are working diligently to better understand Tribal and Pueblo emergency management requirements. Through engagement and partnership, we aim to enhance the well-being and security of all communities across New Mexico through preparedness before, emergency management during, and recovery after disasters occur.

3. State & Federal statutes applicable to DHSEM's Tribal Liaison Program

DHSEM complies with federal and state laws and regulations, Executive Orders, and Presidential Memoranda governing interactions with Nations, Pueblos and Tribes including those listed below:

- i. [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966](#)
- ii. [National Environmental Policy Act of 1970](#)
- iii. [The American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978](#)
- iv. [The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979](#)
- v. [Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990](#)
- vi. [New Mexico State Tribal Collaboration Act \(STCA\)](#)

4. Divisions and Programs that Collaborate with Tribes and Pueblos

1. Preparedness Bureau: The Preparedness Bureau works with community stakeholders before incidents to build a more resilient New Mexico. Below is a summary of each program and the services that are available to all local and tribal governments within the State of New Mexico.
 - i. Training and Exercise: This program provides technical assistance for local and tribal emergency management programs through a continuous cycle of planning, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating and taking action to correct and mitigate.
 1. DHSEM supported a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in Santa Domingo Pueblo successfully graduating 30 participants from Santo Domino, Cochiti, and San Felipe. CERT is a program that trains community members in disaster response. CERT teams are organized and managed at the local level. The local preparedness program coordinates and support this program for the state at large by providing training opportunities and resources for the establishment and sustainment of these vital community-based teams.
 2. DHSEM provided the ICS 300 training course to the Mescalero Apache Tribe. This training helps emergency response staff prepare for incidents,

- understand how incident command works, and know their role within the structure.
 - 3. DHSEM's Basic Academy training program graduated two members of the Laguna Pueblo. The Basic Academy consists of five training courses, totally 40 hours of emergency management education throughout the course of a year.
 - 4. DHSEM works with tribal entities to coordinate FEMA relevant training courses made available to tribal emergency managers based on the Tribe or Pueblo's needs. We coordinate with FEMA to either bring instructors to New Mexico or to send emergency managers to FEMA's training facility in Maryland.
 - ii. Local Preparedness Coordinators, in collaboration with the Tribal Liaison, provide technical assistance with:
 - 1. Development of comprehensive emergency plans;
 - 2. Capability development based on shortfalls;
 - 3. National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance;
 - 4. Training & exercise assessments; after-action reports plans;
2. Operations Bureau: Responsible for overseeing state-level response activities. Response activities include coordinating resources during disasters and providing situational expertise to emergency managers.
- i. State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) was activated in response to severe wildfires and subsequent flooding that affected tribal communities, including the Mescalero Apache Tribe. DHSEM's Operations Section maintained direct, day-to-day coordination with tribal leadership to support emergency operations, facilitate resource movement, and ensure timely response to evolving threats. Focus was placed on maintaining consistent communication channels and honoring tribal priorities throughout the incident lifecycle.
 - ii. In 2025, DHSEM made a historic first-time appearance at the Gathering of Nations Pow Wow (GON), one of the largest Indigenous cultural events in North America. By deploying a Tribal Liaison Officer to the event, DHSEM established an unprecedented level of visibility, trust, and coordination with tribal communities, public safety agencies, and event organizers. The Liaison conducted on-site assessments with Expo NM and GON safety leadership, participated in multi-agency briefings led by New Mexico State Police, and supported field operations throughout the event. This presence was recognized by tribal leaders and event staff as a long-overdue milestone in state-tribal relations, setting a new precedent for culturally informed emergency management at major tribal gatherings.
 - iii. Additionally, DHSEM provided radios for Mescalero Apache responders to allow them to communicate with other responding agencies during the fires and flooding.

- iv. The DHSEM interim tribal liaison officer coordinated closely with Secretary Monette and James Mountain during the early days of the declared disaster, at the Governor's direction, to map out the Federal and State agencies supporting the Mescalero tribe to ensure unity of effort and shared understanding of the support available.
 - v. DHSEM coordinated with state agencies to provide mental and behavioral health resources to Jicarilla Apache after the active shooter incident at Jicarilla High School on August 8, 2023.
3. Fusion Center Bureau: Serves as a focal point for information sharing with federal, state, tribal and local public safety partners to assist their efforts to deter, detect and respond to threats, risks, and vulnerabilities in our state.
- i. The NM Fusion Center has been involved with Navajo School and Community Task Force Meeting leading up to their Navajo Nation Safety Summit in June 2025. The team remains active with the Navajo Community Task Force.
 - ii. Threat Assessments are available to local, state, tribal and federal entities in New Mexico through the Fusion Center to identify potential threat ahead of events and for critical infrastructure.
 - iii. The NM Fusion Center provides a method for sharing information to state, local and tribal entities to identify and address cybersecurity risks or threats.
4. Recovery and Mitigation Bureau: Supports local and tribal entities after a disaster to coordinate with state and federal agencies to aid impacted residents, and to repair and rebuild communities in ways that make them more resilient. Coordinates and administers statewide floodplain management and hazard mitigation programs, including both the planning of natural hazard mitigation projects and project implementation. The goal of the program is to reduce the short- and long-term effects of natural disasters, such as floods, wildfires, droughts, severe storms, and landslides, among others.
- i. DHSEM is working with the Pueblo of San Felipe to execute the allocation of the Cougar Road Flood Mitigation project and to update their Hazard Mitigation Plan. In addition to the allocation of funding, we provide technical support with FEMA.
 - ii. DHSEM is working with the Mescalero Apache Tribe, in coordination with Lincoln County, on a watershed restoration project for areas affected by the 2024 South Fork and Salt fires. The purpose of the project is to identify mitigation projects that may be implemented by the Tribe for watershed flooding protection.

5. State Fire Marshal's Office

- 1. The State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) distributes resources to local, county, and tribal entities to increase fire protections in all communities which result in reduced loss of life and property from fire incidents and lower insurance rates based on Insurance Service Office surveys.

- i. SFMO provided *Fuego Safety Squad* training to 11 schools in the Navajo Nation and the Zuni Pueblo Reservation, providing fire prevention and safety education to 808 students. We are working to add more Tribal and Pueblo schools in FY 2026.
- ii. SFMO assisted partners including BIA, Jemez Pueblo Police, Santa Ana Police, Tesuque Police, and Pojoaque Police with eight fire investigations to help identify origin and cause.
- iii. In FY 2025, the Fire Support Bureau distributed \$3,727,547 in funding to fire and EMS departments for equipment, supplies, and training resources. The following departments are on or serve tribal communities:
 1. Sandoval County - Santa Ana & Zia, Jemez: \$285,646
 2. Santa Fe County - Tesuque, Pojoaque and Nambe: \$232,420
 3. Rio Arriba - Dulce: \$101,128
 4. McKinley County - Navajo Nation: \$ 2,191,099
 5. Cibola County – Laguna: \$404,512
 6. Taos County – Picuris: \$ 95,806
 7. Otero County – Mescalero: \$136,610
 8. Bernalillo County – Sandia: \$122,421
 9. San Juan County - Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle: \$111,774
 10. Cochiti Lake – Cochiti: \$46,131

6. FY 2025 Top Four Accomplishments Related to Tribes and Pueblos

1. Provided direct emergency coordination with Mescalero Apache Tribe.
 - i. Coordinated real-time emergency support during the Seven Springs Fire and post-fire flood threats.
 - ii. Deployed field personnel to the Tribal EOC and submitted timely SITREPs under ESF 17 – Tribal Coordination.
 - iii. Facilitated requests for HESCO barriers, temporary housing, and flood kits, while elevating tribal priorities to state leadership.
 - iv. Developed stronger intergovernmental trust and structured joint recovery planning with BIA and State Forestry.
2. Launch of Tribal Grant and Technical Assistance Program
 - i. Hosted annual Tribal Grant Workshops to build capacity across New Mexico’s 23 federally recognized tribes and pueblos.
 - ii. Provided hands-on support for Hazard Mitigation Plans, Emergency Operations Plans, and federal grant compliance (e.g., EMPG, SHSGP).
 - iii. Ensured tribes were kept up to date on funding opportunities and compliance deadlines through direct outreach and support mechanisms.

3. Policy-Driven Tribal Liaison Integration

- iv. Developed and implemented the DHSEM Tribal Liaison Engagement and Support Policy, institutionalizing daily outreach, cultural respect, and intergovernmental equity.
- v. The TLO role now includes responsibilities in planning, training, grant guidance, SEOC coordination, and federal consultation processes.
- vi. This policy ensures a structured, repeatable approach to tribal inclusion across all phases of emergency management.

4. Establishment of Tribal-Specific Coordination Channels

- vii. Responded to tribal feedback by proposing a recurring, statewide tribal-only emergency management coordination call.
- viii. Initiated through engagements like the one with Santa Ana Pueblo, where leadership emphasized the value of dedicated communication platform
- ix. These efforts reflect a systemic shift toward more inclusive and responsive intergovernmental emergency communication.

7. FY 2025 Top Four Goals & Objectives Related to Tribes and Pueblos

- 1. Hire experienced and capable Tribal Liaison officer to build a benchmark program.
- 2. Build and execute a comprehensive engagement plan to better understand requirements, build trust, foster collaboration and improve local preparedness ahead of disasters amongst all the Tribes and Pueblos in New Mexico.
- 3. Secure policy and where required statute changes that better enable DHSEM to leverage the Interstate Mutual Aid System (IMAS) and Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) to provide more agile support to Tribes and Pueblos in a manner that meets their requirements and protects sovereignty.
- 4. Conduct employment outreach to Tribes and Pueblos to ensure career opportunities at DHSEM are more effectively communicated.

8. Miscellaneous

- 1. DHSEM looks forward to using the State Tribal Consultation Guidebook and State Tribal Consultation Toolkit in the field once the Indian Affairs Department makes a final copy available for use.
- 2. DHSEM will continue to facilitate stronger government-to-government collaboration, uphold tribal sovereignty, and promote community well-being. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the Department of Indian Affairs, Department of

Military Affairs, as well as other agencies to support Tribes and Pueblos in our state.

9. Key Names and Contact Information

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